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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/023,807	12/21/2001	Yoshihiro Inomata	Q67776	4027

7590 08/25/2004

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EXAMINER

KOSOWSKI, ALEXANDER J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2125

DATE MAILED: 08/25/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/023,807

Applicant(s)

INOMATA, YOSHIHIRO

Examiner

Alexander J Kosowski

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 May 2004.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 21 December 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/25/04.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

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DETAILED ACTION

1) Claims 1-18 are presented for examination in light of the amendment filed 5/18/04. This is a second non-final rejection.

Specification

2) The objections to the specification from the last office action are withdrawn in light of the amendment filed 5/18/04.

Claim Objections

3) The claim objections from the last office action are withdrawn in light of the amendment filed 5/18/04.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4) The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5) Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moreno (U.S. PG PUB 2002/0035515), further in view of Cayne et al (U.S. PG PUB 2002/0147525).

Referring to claim 1, Moreno teaches a locker system comprising lockers (Paragraph 0008, lines 3-5), a control center for remotely controlling said lockers, locker controllers applied to said lockers respectively, and user terminals operated by users of said lockers (Paragraphs 0019 and 0031), wherein each of said lockers include at least one compartment having an electronically controlled lock system (Paragraphs 0027 and Paragraphs 0043), said control center

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receives requests from said user terminals via a telecommunications network, and sends instructions based on the received requests to said locker controller via said telecommunications network (Paragraphs 0029 and 0031), and said locker controllers receive the instructions from said control center via said telecommunications network, and control the corresponding lockers based on the received instructions (Paragraphs 0029 and 0031). However, Moreno does not explicitly teach that each locker has a display unit for displaying information given by said control center.

Cayne teaches a control center for remotely controlling lockers whereby each locker compartment comprises a display to present information generated by a control center to a user (Paragraph 0050).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to provide individual locker compartments with a display unit for displaying information in the invention taught by Moreno since this would allow a user to observe the status of a locker via a visual indication (Cayne, Paragraph 0050).

Referring to claim 2, Moreno teaches that said control center obtains status information of said lockers, specifies an available locker compartment based on the status information and the user's request, and provides information representing the available locker compartment to said user terminal which requested said control center to inform an available locker compartment (Paragraphs 0056 and 0059).

Referring to claim 3, Moreno teaches that said locker controller controls said electronically controlled lock system of the compartment to lock or unlock the compartment indicated by the instruction from said control center (Paragraphs 0027 and 0031).

Referring to claim 4, Moreno teaches said control center generates ID information in response to receiving the user's request and transmits the generated ID information to said locker controller (Paragraphs 0068 and 0085-0086), said locker controller receives the ID information from said control center (Paragraphs 0085-0086), said user terminal transmits the ID information input by the user to said control center and said control center receives the ID information from said user terminal and transmits an instruction to allow the user to use the locker compartment to said locker controller, if the received ID information is correct (Paragraphs 0068 and 0084-0085). However, Moreno does not explicitly teach that said locker controller controls a corresponding display unit to display the received ID information.

Cayne teaches a control center for remotely controlling lockers whereby each locker compartment comprises means to present information to a user (Paragraph 0050).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to provide specified locker compartments with instructions to display information to a user in the invention taught by Moreno since this would allow a user to observe the status of the locker via a visual indication (Cayne, Paragraph 0050).

Referring to claim 5, Moreno teaches the system above whereby lockers can be kept locked or unlocked. However, Moreno does not explicitly teach that unused locker compartments are kept locked.

It is respectfully submitted that a locker compartment could be kept in either a locked or unlocked state when empty, and the skilled artisan would have found it an obvious modification to keep the compartment locked with the motivation of providing increased security by limiting locker storage access only to registered or paying customers.

Referring to claim 6, Moreno teaches a delivery center and deliverer terminals connected to said telecommunication network, wherein said control center obtains information regarding the delivery from said delivery center, stores in a storage unit information sets each regarding to the delivery, the locker compartments, and the users so that the information sets are associated to each other, specifies a locker compartment based on the information stored in said storage unit, transmits information representing the specified locker compartment to said deliverer terminal and allows the deliverer to use the specified compartment by sending an instruction to unlock the compartment to said locker controller (Paragraphs 0085-0089).

Referring to claim 7, Moreno teaches an advertising information provider being connected to said telecommunications network, wherein said advertisement information provider obtains information regarding a user of said locker compartment and selects advertisement information based on the information regarding the user (Paragraph 0048). However, Moreno does not explicitly teach providing advertisement information to be displayed on said display unit with said locker controller, nor transmitting the selected advertisement information to said locker controller when the user uses the locker compartment (Paragraphs 0008 and 0048).

Cayne teaches a control center for remotely controlling lockers whereby each locker compartment comprises means to present information to a user (Paragraph 0050).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to provide specified locker compartments with instructions to display information to a user in the invention taught by Moreno since this would allow a user to observe the status of the locker via a visual indication (Cayne, Paragraph 0050). In addition, examiner notes that Moreno provides the functionality to display information such as advertisements at a user terminal, and it

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would therefore have been obvious to expand this functionality by duplicating the user terminal for each specific locker compartment since this would allow more users to view information such as advertisements simultaneously, which would increase the effectiveness of the advertising campaign.

Referring to claim 8, Moreno teaches a billing server connected to said telecommunications network, which bills for service fees regarding said locker (Paragraph 0044).

Referring to claim 9, Moreno teaches obtaining information representing the status of lockers via a telecommunications network (Paragraphs 0056 and 0059), receiving user's requests via said telecommunications network, specifying an available locker compartment in said locker which matches the user's requests based on the obtained status information and informing the user of the specified locker via said telecommunications network (Paragraph 0059), informing the specified locker of ID information via said telecommunications network (Paragraph 0068), obtaining information to be presented to the user (Paragraph 0048), receiving the ID information from the user via said telecommunications network and providing a locker with an instruction to unlock the specified locker compartment via said telecommunications network, if the received ID information is correct (Paragraphs 0068 and 0085-0086). However, Moreno does not explicitly teach obtaining information to be presented at the lockers or informing the specified locker with an instruction to present the ID information to the user.

Cayne teaches a control center for remotely controlling lockers whereby each locker compartment comprises means to present information to a user (Paragraph 0050).

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Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to provide specified locker compartments with instructions to display information to a user in the invention taught by Moreno since this would allow a user to observe the status of the locker via a visual indication (Cayne, Paragraph 0050).

Referring to claim 10, see rejection of claim 5 above.

Referring to claim 11, see rejection of claim 7 above.

Referring to claim 12, Moreno teaches obtaining information regarding a delivery from a deliverer via said telecommunications network, specifying a locker compartment in said locker based on the obtained delivery information, and informing the deliverer of the information representing the specified locker compartment via said telecommunications network, wherein said ID information receiving step receives the ID information from the deliverer via said telecommunications network and said instruction providing step provides a locker with an instruction to unlock the specified locker compartment via said telecommunications network, if the received ID information is correct (Paragraphs 0085-0089). However, Moreno does not explicitly teach informing the specified locker of ID information via said telecommunications network together with an instruction to present the ID information to the deliverer.

Cayne teaches a control center for remotely controlling lockers whereby each locker compartment comprises means to present information to a user (Paragraph 0050).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to provide specified locker compartments with instructions to display information to a user in the invention taught by Moreno since this would allow a user to observe the status of the locker via a visual indication (Cayne, Paragraph 0050).

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Referring to claim 13, Moreno teaches the method above whereby specific locker compartments can be accessed by authorized users. However, Moreno does not explicitly teach recognizing a plurality of users as a group and allowing the plurality of users of the group to share the specified locker compartment.

It is respectfully submitted that any number of users could share a single locker by utilizing the same access information, and the skilled artisan would have found it an obvious modification to allow multiple users access to the same locker with the motivation of providing redundant accessibility and the capability to distribute a high volume of goods to multiple similar recipients.

Referring to claim 14, Moreno teaches obtaining information representing fees for the services of the lockers user by user and billing the user for the service based on the obtained fee information (Paragraph 0044).

Referring to claim 15, Moreno teaches a connector which connects a control center to a telecommunications network (Paragraph 0029), a status manager which controls said connector to obtain status information of the lockers (Paragraphs 0056 and 0059), a request receiver which controls said connector to receive user's request from user's terminals being connected to said telecommunications network and a locker finder which specifies an available locker compartment based on the status information, which matches the user's request received by the receiver (Paragraphs 0056 and 0059), an ID information generator which generates ID information in response to the specification by said locker finder, an information presenter which controls said connector to present information representing the locker compartment specified by said locker finder to said user's terminal together with the ID information generated by said ID

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information generator and an ID information transmitter which controls said connector to provide the specified locker compartment with the ID information (Paragraphs 0068 and 0085-0086), an ID information receiver which controls said connector to receive the ID information from the user's terminal, and ID information authenticator which determines whether the ID information received by said ID information receiver coincides with the ID information generated by said ID information generator, a locker controller which controls said connector to transmit an instruction to unlock the locker compartment if said ID information authenticator determines that the ID information sets coincide with each other (Paragraphs 0068 and 0085-0086), and an information manager which obtains information to be presented (Paragraph 0048, whereby the manager determines which graphics or advertisements to be presented to the user). However, Moreno does not explicitly teach that the ID information transmitter which controls said connector provides the specified locker compartment with an instruction to present the ID information to the user, nor that said information manager obtains information to be presented at the lockers.

Cayne teaches a control center for remotely controlling lockers whereby each locker compartment comprises means to present information to a user (Paragraph 0050).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to provide specified locker compartments with instructions to display information to a user in the invention taught by Moreno since this would allow a user to observe the status of the locker via a visual indication (Cayne, Paragraph 0050). In addition, examiner notes that Moreno provides the functionality to display information such as advertisements at a user terminal, and it

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would therefore have been obvious to expand this functionality by duplicating the user terminal for each specific locker compartment since this would allow more users to view the information.

Referring to claim 16, Moreno teaches a user information obtainer which obtains information regarding to the user, and an advertisement selector which selects advertisement information based on the user information obtained by said user information obtainer (Paragraphs 0008 and 0048). However, Moreno does not explicitly teach that the selected advertisement information is transmitted to the specified locker compartment together with an instruction to present the advertisement information to the user.

Cayne teaches a control center for remotely controlling lockers whereby each locker compartment comprises means to present information to a user (Paragraph 0050).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to provide specified locker compartments with instructions to display information to the user in the invention taught by Moreno since this would allow a user to observe the status of the locker via a visual indication (Cayne, Paragraph 0050). In addition, examiner notes that Moreno provides the functionality to display advertisements at a user terminal, and it would therefore have been obvious to expand this functionality by duplicating the user terminal for each specific locker compartment since this would allow more users to view advertisements simultaneously, which would increase the effectiveness of the advertising campaign.

Referring to claim 17, the claim varies from claim 15 in that it claims a computer readable recording medium storing a program rather than a control center. The control center of claim 15 could inherently be implemented on a computer readable recording medium storing a program. Therefore, referring to claim 17, see rejection of claim 15 above.

Referring to claim 18, Moreno teaches obtaining advertisement information to be presented at the lockers, obtaining information regarding to the user and selecting advertisement information based on the obtained user information (Paragraphs 0008 and 0048). However, Moreno does not explicitly teach transmitting the advertisement information to the specified locker together with an instruction to present the advertisement information to the user.

Cayne teaches a control center for remotely controlling lockers whereby each locker compartment comprises means to present information to a user (Paragraph 0050).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to provide specified locker compartments with instructions to display information to the user in the invention taught by Moreno since this would allow a user to observe the status of the locker via a visual indication (Cayne, Paragraph 0050). In addition, examiner notes that Moreno provides the functionality to display advertisements at a user terminal, and it would therefore have been obvious to expand this functionality by duplicating the user terminal for each specific locker compartment since this would allow more users to view advertisements simultaneously, which would increase the effectiveness of the advertising campaign.

Response to Arguments

6) In the amendment filed 5/18/04, Applicant argues that Moreno does not explicitly teach a display feature for displaying information at an individual locker, nor an advertising information manager for obtaining information to display at a locker. With regard to the display feature, examiner notes the new rejection above. With regard to the added limitation in claims 9, 15 and 17 of an information manager capable of obtaining information to be presented, examiner notes Paragraph 0048 of Moreno teaches that the terminal obtains information (including graphics or

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advertising) to be presented to a user of the system. Although this information is presented at the terminal, examiner has noted in the rejection above that it would have been obvious to duplicate the user terminal for each specific locker compartment.

Conclusion

7) The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Kucharczyk et al (U.S. Pat 6,300,873) – teaches a locker system with displays on every individual locker.

Rankine (U.S. Pat 5,299,862) – teaches a storage device.

Frisch (U.S. Pat 5,212,644) – teaches a locker system.

Umeda et al (U.S. Pat 6,010,064) – teaches a locker apparatus.

8) Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alexander J Kosowski whose telephone number is 703-305-3958.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, alternating Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Leo Picard can be reached on 703-308-0538. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306. In addition, the examiner's RightFAX number is 703-746-8370.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

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Alexander J. Kosowski
Patent Examiner
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Picard", written in a cursive style.

LEO PICARD
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100